

VTSLP Virginia Teaching Scholarship Loan Program

The primary purpose of the VTSLP is to provide financial support to students who are preparing to teach in one of Virginia's critical shortage fields. The critical shortage fields are determined annually through the Supply and Demand Survey of Administrative and Instructional Personnel, distributed to every school division in Virginia by the Department of Education. Shortages in specific subject areas are derived from the top 10 academic disciplines identified by the survey as shortage fields.

For 2003-2004, the top 10 critical shortage fields include all areas of special education, mathematics, science (in order of priority needs: physics, earth science, chemistry and biology), career and technical education (technology education, trade and industrial education, business education, and family and consumer sciences), foreign language, English as a second language, middle grades 6-8, library media K-12, art preK-12, and reading specialist. Males preparing to teach in the elementary grades and people of color in all teaching fields are also eligible.

The VTSLP application process begins early in the second semester when the Department of Education distributes application materials to the 37 colleges and universities in Virginia with approved teacher preparation programs. **Students who are eligible for the VTSLP must be nominated by the college or university to receive the award.** To be eligible, students must be enrolled on a full- or part-time basis in one of the critical shortage teaching fields, be at or beyond the sophomore year, possess a grade point average of at least 2.7, and be identified as a domiciliary resident of Virginia.

Through the VTSLP, eligible students may receive a scholarship-loan for as much as \$3,720. When the student completes his/her teacher preparation program, the scholarship-loan may be totally forgiven if the student teaches for four semesters in the public schools of Virginia in the critical shortage field. Recipients may teach in any public school in Virginia. If, upon completion of the program, the student does not teach, the scholarship-loan must be paid back to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

A selection panel representing teachers, college and university faculty, professional organizations, and Department of Education personnel chooses recipients. Recipients are notified individually of their selection. For more information, call the Virginia Department of Education automated response line and leave your name and address.

In 1993, critical shortage areas for Virginia were determined from a study that was conducted by the Department of Education. At that time, school divisions reported shortages in all areas of special education, technology education, chemistry, earth science, physics, and foreign languages. Males preparing to teach in elementary and middle classrooms and all minority students were also identified as critical shortages. A survey conducted in 1998 identified mathematics as a shortage area.

For 1999-2000, the Department of Education contracted with the Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research to conduct a statewide survey of instructional personnel. Results from the survey indicated that previously identified shortage areas continued.

| NUMBER OF VTSLP AWARDS BY CATEGORY FOR YEARS OF 1996-97 THROUGH 2001-02 | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| | 1996-97 | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1999-00 | 2000-01 | 2001-02 | Total |
| Special Education | 24 | 31 | 42 | 38 | 60 | 56 | 251 |
| Males in Elementary | 23 | 22 | 22 | 20 | 25 | 38 | 150 |
| Minorities | 22 | 29 | 18 | 17 | 23 | 18 | 127 |
| Mathematics | NA* | NA* | NA* | 10 | 21 | 21 | 52 |
| Sciences | 13 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 15 | 10 | 57 |
| Foreign Languages | 7 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 50 |
| Technology | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 15 |
| Total | 92 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 153 | 157 | 702 |
| *Mathematics was not designed a critical shortage area in these years. | | | | | | | |

The 2000 Session of the Virginia General Assembly required the Board of Education to establish criteria for determining critical teacher shortage areas. The Board determined that the Department of Education would conduct an annual survey of instructional personnel in Virginia school divisions to determine critical shortage areas and that the top 10 academic shortage areas identified by the survey would be used to award the VTSLP.

As a result of the annual survey, there will be some fluctuation in the areas identified each year as critical shortages.

NUMBER OF VTSLP AWARDS BY CATEGORY FOR 2002-2003

| VTSLP Categories | Number Awarded |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Special Education | 47 |
| Science | 20 |
| Foreign Language | 4 |
| Technology Education | 2 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Mathematics | 24 |
| English as a Second Language | 4 |
| Library Media | 1 |
| Reading Specialist | 3 |
| Agricultural Education | 1 |
| Work and Family Studies* | 0 |
| Men in Elementary/Middle Grades | 22 |
| Minorities | 35 |
| Total | 163 |

The survey conducted in 2002-2003 identified critical teaching shortages in special education, mathematics, reading specialist, Spanish PreK-12, science (earth science and chemistry), middle grades 6-8, library media PreK-12, music education PreK-12, technology education, and English. These are the critical teaching shortage areas used for the VTSLP awards for the 2003-2004 academic year.